



CHAPTER SEVEN: WRITTEN DIRECTIVES & ACCREDITATION



CHAPTER SEVEN

WRITTEN DIRECTIVES AND ACCREDITATION OF THE GREENSBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT

This chapter provides a review of the Greensboro Police Department's written directive system (policy manual) and the accreditation program for law enforcement by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). One of the first steps in accreditation is to develop and actually adhere to an up-to-date police policy manual.

The Greensboro Police Department was the first police department to be accredited through CALEA in the State of North Carolina. A former chief of police in Greensboro is currently the Executive Director of CALEA, a distinguished and well-respected position in the law enforcement profession.

One of the key indicators of the organizational health of a police department is the state of its written directives and standard operating procedures, which refer to rules, regulations, general orders and programs.

GREENSBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES

The Greensboro Police Department provided the Study Team with a copy of its written directives in an electronic format. In reviewing the policy manual, it is clear that the Department has devoted considerable attention to its written directives system. Additionally, the Study Team was provided with and reviewed a large number of standard operating procedures from throughout the Department; as with the directives, these documents were detailed and well developed to provide staff with guidance and a definition of responsibilities.

While the directives and standard operating procedures are very detailed, the manuals may require updating to be consistent with the future organizational structure, police programs and police practices.



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GREENSBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES (continued)

The function responsible for accreditation management to satisfy CALEA requirements in the Greensboro Police Department is overseen by the executive officer in the Office of the Chief. The Accreditation Management office is staffed by one program technician and, according to the 2007 Organization Structure and Functions Guide, "...is responsible for the Department's ongoing compliance with the standards...this Section monitors Departmental policies and procedures to ensure they are consistent with applicable standards. This Section is responsible for coordinating the revision and development of the agency's system of Departmental Directives."

At the current time, there are several other staff assigned to Accreditation Management, including a hire-back, a light duty officer and a pre-hire. These additional personnel are assigned to the unit at this time to assist in the final preparations being made for an onsite re-accreditation in August of this year and a mock onsite later this spring.

POLICE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

Frequent questions about police accreditation include: What is accreditation? Who organized the Commission? Why? What are the standards designed to accomplish? What areas do the standards cover? How much does it cost? What are the benefits of accreditation? These and other questions deserve consideration. The following overview was authored by Mr. James Cotter, a former director of the FBI National Academy for 15 years, the first director of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies and a CBI consultant for eight years.

Accreditation is a concept, a process and a status. The concept emphasizes a voluntary, self-motivated approach by which organizations seek to achieve, objectively verify, and maintain high quality in their operations through periodic evaluations conducted by an independent, non-governmental body that has established standards for its "clientele." In simple terms, "to accredit" means to recognize or vouch for an agency as conforming to a body of standards related to a specific discipline--in this instance, law enforcement.



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POLICE ACCREDITATION PROCESS (continued)

For CALEA, the process consists of formal application, a mutual aid contract, an in-depth self assessment, an on-site assessment by Commission-selected practitioner assessors from outside the State of Arizona, and final Commission review and decision.

Self-assessment enables an agency to establish proofs of compliance with standards specific to the agency, reviewing its organization, management, operations, and administrative activities to determine if it believes it meets the requirements. Certain standards are mandatory based on health, life, safety, and importance to the community and the agency. Certain standards are “other than mandatory”—important, yet not critical. Agencies must comply with all applicable mandatory and 80 percent of the "other" standards of their choice.

Once an agency feels it is in compliance, and it is evaluated and found so by assessors, the agency is recognized for having achieved the status of an “accredited agency.” Accreditation is for three years, when a similar process will determine maintenance of the accredited status.

The Commission was formed by four executive membership law enforcement associations whose members direct approximately 80 percent of the law enforcement community in the U.S. The 21-person Commission was formed to develop the standards and establish and administer the accreditation process by which law enforcement agencies can demonstrate voluntarily that they meet professional criteria. The overall goal of the accreditation program is to improve the delivery of law enforcement services.

The standards were developed to help law enforcement agencies achieve the following:

- Increase agency capabilities to prevent and control crime.
- Enhance agency effectiveness and efficiency in delivery of law enforcement services.



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POLICE ACCREDITATION PROCESS (continued)

- Improve cooperation with other law enforcement agencies and with other components of the criminal justice system.
- Increase citizen and staff confidence in the goals, objectives, policies, and practices of the agency.

The standards are designed to cover: (1) role, responsibilities, and relationships with other agencies; (2) organization, management, and administration; (3) personnel administration; (4) operations, support, and traffic law enforcement; (5) prisoner and court related services; and (6) auxiliary and technical services. Designed to reflect the best professional practices in each of the six areas, the standards deal with "what to" leaving the decisions of "how to" up to the agency.

The chiefs of police in agencies deeply involved in the process attest to the benefits they have received in a few short years. The CALEA Web site notes five major benefits: controlled liability insurance rates, stronger defense against lawsuits, greater accountability, support from government officials, and increased community advocacy. However, the Study Team believes there are additional benefits.

Accreditation Benefits for the Agency's Chief Executive Officer and the Agency's Command Staff

1. Accreditation requires an in-depth review of every aspect of the agency's organization, management, operations, and administration including:
 - a. establishment of agency goals and objectives, with provision for periodic updating;
 - b. re-evaluation of how agency resources are being utilized in accordance with agency goals, objectives, and mission assignments;



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POLICE ACCREDITATION PROCESS (continued)

- c. reevaluation of agency policies and procedures, especially as documented in the agency's written directive system; and,
 - d. correction of deficiencies before they become public problems.
2. The accreditation standards provide neutral guidelines for developing strong budget justifications, especially for personnel and their allocation across functions and activities.
3. The accreditation standards provide norms against which agency performance can be measured and monitored over time.
4. Accreditation provides the agency with a continuing flow of information about exemplary policies, procedures, and projects as distributed by the Commission.
5. Accreditation provides the agency an opportunity to participate in the development of new or revised standards.
6. Accreditation provides recognition that the agency's managerial and operational policies and procedures are in accord with a body of nationwide standards and that the agency has made a concerted effort to attain professional status.

Accreditation Benefits for All Other Members of the Agency—Sworn Personnel and Civilian Employees

1. Accreditation assures that agency policies and procedures are in written form and available to all agency personnel.
2. Accreditation assures agency personnel that every aspect of its personnel system is in accord with nationwide standards and that it is both fair and equitable.



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POLICE ACCREDITATION PROCESS (continued)

3. Accreditation enhances the morale of agency personnel, building the confidence of employees in the effectiveness and efficiency of their own agency.

Accreditation Benefits for Neighboring Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Agencies

1. Accreditation promotes relationships with other neighboring law enforcement agencies, as well as prosecutors, courts, correctional agencies, and state and local governmental officials.
2. Accreditation provides objective measures to justify decisions related to budget requests and personnel policies.
3. Accreditation should reduce the likelihood of vicarious liability suits against the agency.
4. Accreditation should reduce the cost of liability insurance for the agency.

Accreditation Benefits for Citizens in the Agency's Service Area

1. Accreditation demonstrates the commitment of the agency to professionalism in terms of adherence to a body of national standards.
2. Accreditation assures the community that its law enforcement agency is committed to the provision of services of the highest quality and that its policies and procedures are effective and responsive on the one hand, and fair and equitable on the other.
3. Accreditation enhances community understanding of the law enforcement agency's role, as well as its goals and objectives.



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POLICE ACCREDITATION PROCESS (continued)

4. Accreditation commits the agency to a broad range of programs of direct benefit to the public (e.g., community crime prevention) as well as to programs to cope with man-made or natural disasters.
5. In summation, accreditation promotes community cooperation and understanding.

ACCREDITATION IN THE GREENSBORO POLICE DEPARTMENT

The employee in Accreditation Management is responsible for ensuring that the Department is, and remains, in compliance with all CALEA standards. The Department is currently accredited, but must be re-accredited by CALEA every three years. The time period prior to re-accreditation is very intense, but for most of the time, the CALEA activities alone do not require a full-time person. In the Greensboro Police Department the additional responsibilities of policy (directives), procedure and forms management, in conjunction with accreditation, necessitate a full-time position assigned to this function.

The Greensboro Police Department was the first department accredited by CALEA in North Carolina in 1986. The Department was re-accredited in 1991, 1996, 1999, 2002 and 2005. An onsite assessment for the required three year re-accreditation is scheduled for August 23 - 27 of this year. This is a very intense time for the staff involved in the re-accreditation, as well as for the Department as a whole.

In addition to the ongoing management of accreditation files and preparation for an onsite assessment, the incumbent in the position is assigned responsibility for maintaining historical archives of departmental directives, special orders, personnel orders and standard operating procedures. In addition, the current standard operating procedures manuals from each division and departmental Directives Manual are maintained by this position. The incumbent is also responsible for the review, dissemination and maintenance of departmental directives in the creation/revision stages. Finally, the incumbent bears responsibility for forms management within the Department; this responsibility involves the monitoring/maintenance



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of approximately 307 forms. Forms managed range from those used regularly department-wide, to those rarely or occasionally used by a single entity.

Observations

In the Greensboro Police Department, the management of accreditation, policy, procedure and forms has been created as a seamless function, ensuring the adequate flow of information and coordination of functions. The civilian employee currently in the program technician position appears to have all the attributes necessary to successfully serve as an accreditation manager—attention to detail, experience, consistency, sense of history, and a broad knowledge of a variety of subject areas, to mention a few. Given the current condition of the accreditation process, as reported to the Study Team, the Department appears to be prepared for its upcoming mock and onsite assessments. Additionally, the cooperation within the agency in working together to ensure and provide proofs of compliance is to be complimented.

The Study Team was impressed by the level of coordination brought about by having accreditation, policy, procedure and forms vested in a single office. If the decision is made at some time in the future to form a unified planning unit within the Department consideration should be given to including this function within the structure of the unit. The history normally available through the accreditation files and staff are a definite asset to planning for the future; the planning capability often assists in the implementation or enhancement of the best business practices associated with the accreditation standards

One comment related to the directives and procedures of the Department relates to the similarity of the numbering system used in both documents. In the experience of the Study Team a differentiated, unique numbering system, perhaps with identifying designators, for each bureau or division, within the standard operating procedures, would be very helpful in discussing and citing policy and procedure. Additionally, a stand alone directive on the process and procedures for creating or revising directives and standard operating procedures,



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incorporating and expanding upon the definitions provides in 16.1.1 and aspects of 16.1.2, 16.1.3 and 16.1.4 of Chapter 16 of the Department's Directives, may be beneficial.

SUMMARY

The Greensboro Police Department has a very good police policy manual. It can serve as a model for other police departments. There are policies that refer to titles and sections that will need to be revised once the City and Department finalize a future organizational structure, programs and practices outlined in this review and plan.

The Department has staffed the CALEA function with a full-time civilian who has a sworn background and a strong sense of commitment to the agency. This position is pivotal in the Department's upcoming re-accreditation and in future planning endeavors of the agency which require a broad ranging knowledge and history.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Department should ensure that all employees are trained on all Police Department policies relating to their work.
- 7.2 The Department should conduct a regularly scheduled review of both its directives and standard operating procedures to ensure they are current and consistent.
- 7.3 The Department should consider a differentiating numbering system for its directives and standard operating procedures with unique leading identifiers for the bureau and division standard operating procedures.
- 7.4 The Department should, if implementing a coordinated planning unit in the future as recommended, place the accreditation/policy function within that unit.



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RECOMMENDATIONS (continued)

- 7.5 The City and Department should continue its strong support for, and cooperation with, the accreditation function and its related responsibilities.

